Claim Amendments

Please cancel claims 10,12-20 and 22-35 have been canceled. Allowed claims 1, 3-9 and 48-55 remain in the patent application.

1. (Previously Presented) A method for molding an ophthalmic lens comprising:
(a) providing a first mold part having a front curve molding surface for the ophthalmic lens;
(b) providing a second mold part having a back curve molding surface for the ophthalmic lens;
(c) extruding a melt-processable polymer;
(d) cutting a sample from the extruded polymer;
(e) depositing the sample in the first mold part;
(f) moving the first and the second mold parts together to form a mold cavity between the opposing front curve molding surface and back curve molding surface with the polymer therebetween, the mold cavity defining a shape of an ophthalmic lens having a variable volume between a first volume and a second volume, the second volume being greater than the first volume, wherein the mold parts have sufficiently small clearance such that gas escapes from the mold cavity and none of the polymer escapes from the mold cavity;
(g) squeezing the mold parts together with a predetermined force; (h) allowing the polymer to solidify and form a lens, wherein said sample is in the form of a pellet having a length (L) and a diameter (D) in a L/D ratio of between 0.2 and 5;
(i) opening the mold;
(j) removing the lens from the mold;
(k) hydrating the ophthalmic lens; and
(l) packaging the ophthalmic lens.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) A method for making an ophthalmic lens according to claim 1, wherein the melt-processable polymer has a glass transition temperature (T_g), a flow temperature (T_F), and a degradation temperature (T_D), wherein the sample has a volume between the first volume and the second volume.

4. (Previously Presented) The method for making an ophthalmic lens according to claim 3, wherein the extruded polymer is in the form of a wire.

5. (Original) The method for making an ophthalmic lens according to claim 4, wherein:
(1) the cutting comprises slicing the wire with a moving knife at an opening of an extrusion die through which the wire is extruded such that the pellet remains adjacent to the knife; and
(2) the depositing comprises moving the knife to a position proximate the first mold half, and pushing the pellet off the knife and into the first mold part.

6. (Original) The method for making an ophthalmic lens according to claim 5, wherein the pellet is supported by nesting the pellet in a groove or a set of tabs in the knife.

7. (Original) The method for making an ophthalmic lens according to claim 5, wherein the pellet is pushed off the knife with a means selected from the group consisting of an ejector pin, an air burst and a combination thereof.

8. (Previously Presented) The method for making an ophthalmic lens according to claim 5, wherein the knife is at a temperature between 120 °C below the glass transition temperature T_g and the degradation temperature T_D.

9. (Previously Presented) The method for making an ophthalmic lens according to claim 3, wherein the mold parts are independently at temperatures between 120 °C below the glass transition temperature T_g and the degradation temperature T_D of the polymer.

10. (Canceled)
11. (Cancelled)
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46. (Cancelled)
47. (Cancelled)
48. (Previously added) The method for making an ophthalmic lens according to claim 1, further comprising pumping the polymer from an extruder to an extrusion die with a melt pump.

49. (Previously added) The method of molding an ophthalmic lens according to claim 1, wherein the melt-processable polymer is hydrophilic.

50. (Previously added) The method of molding an ophthalmic lens according to claim 1, wherein the melt-processable polymer forms a hydrogel when hydrated.

51. (Previously added) The method of molding an ophthalmic lens according to claim 1, wherein the polymer contains latent crosslinking groups, and wherein the temperature of the mold, the applied force, and the duration of the squeezing are sufficient to crosslink the polymer.

52. (Previously added) The method for molding an ophthalmic lens according to claim 1, wherein the sample volume is between 0.01% and 10% greater than the first volume.

53. (Previously added) The method for making an ophthalmic lens according to claim 1, further comprising a cyclic process, the cyclic process comprising: depositing a second sample of polymer in the mold; wherein the steps are repeated to mold a plurality of samples in the mold.

54. (Previously added) The method for molding an ophthalmic lens according to claim 1, wherein the step of allowing the polymer to solidify and form a lens comprises decreasing the temperature of the mold.

55. (Previously added) The method for molding an ophthalmic lens according to claim 1, wherein the step of removing the lens from the mold comprises: separating one of the two mold parts from the other mold part having the molded ophthalmic lens adhered thereto; pressing a flexible pad into frictional contact with the ophthalmic lens; applying a force to the lens by way of the flexible pad to move the flexible pad to separate the ophthalmic lens from the molding surface; and applying a vacuum to a suction port around the pad thereby picking up the lens.